

Message Text

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14

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 RSR-01 NIC-01

CU-04 /089 W

----- 105346

P R 010345Z AUG 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7755

INFO USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

DIA

CINCPAC

CINCUSARPAC

CINCPACAF

CINCPACFLT

COMUSTDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 7670

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJ: ARMY DAY HONORED AT PRE-CULTURAL REVOLUTION LEVEL

1. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1965, ARMY DAY HAS APPARENTLY PASSED IN THE PRC WITHOUT A MAJOR REGIME EDITORIAL, AND THE TRADITIONAL RECEPTION MARKING THE EVENT WAS ALSO IMITATIVE OF THE MORE MODEST FANFARE GIVEN TO THE ANNIVERSARY IN THAT EARLIER PERIOD. THE FOUR TOP-RANKING REGIME FIGURES WHO ATTENDED LAST YEAR'S GATHERING, TUNG PI-WU, CHU TEH, CHOU EN-LAI, AND CHINAG CHING, SKIPPED THE AFFAIR THIS YEAR. MOST STRICKING, CHOU WENT OUT OF TOWN ON THE EVE OF THE EVENT TO TOUR IN LIAONING PROVINCE WITH A VISITING AFRICAN LEADER.

2. THE SURFACE IMPRESSION, THUS, IS THAT THE PLA'S POLITICAL
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IMAGE HAS BEEN DEFLATED BACK TO ITS PRE-CULTURAL REVOLUTION

LEVEL, AND THERE IS LESS SENSITIVITY OVER THIS NOW THAN THERE WAS LAST YEAR. UT MAY BE SIGNIFICANT, HOWEVER, THAT CHOU SPENT THE ANNIVERSARY WITH MANCHURIA'S MILITARY BOSS AND POLITBURO MEMBER CHEN HSI-LIEN, WHO SEEMS CHOLERIC AT PRESENT OVER THE DRIFT OF REGIME POLICY (WR 30,31). IN ANY EVENT, THE SPOTLIGHT ON CHEN IS A REMINDER OF THE STILL VERY CONSEQUENTIAL POSITION MILITARY FIGURES OCCUPY IN THE REGIONS AND PROVINCES.
DEAN

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NNN

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